

Appl. No. 10/802,334
Amdt. Dated October 12, 2004
Reply to Office Action of September 10, 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A patient registration kiosk system that allows patients to self-register for an appointment with a healthcare provider, comprising:
 - a patient identification mechanism adapted to uniquely identify a patient so that information relevant to that patient can be retrieved from a database;
 - a user interface that presents the retrieved information to the patient and allows the patient to update the information as necessary, thereby maintaining current patient information in the database;
 - an insurance plan identification mechanism adapted to identify insurance plan information including a payor associated with the patient, thereby maintaining current insurance information in the database;
 - a data interface that enables the healthcare provider to form an electronic communication link with the payor to confirm the patient's eligibility for coverage by the payor, based on the identified insurance plan information; and
 - an insurance card scanner adapted to generate an image of each side of an insurance card associated with the patient for storage in the database.
2. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 further comprising:
 - an output device adapted to provide a receipt relevant to the patient's appointment, the receipt including at least one of patient name, unique patient identifier, insurance payor name, plan name or type, patient insurance member number, eligibility confirmation, and office co-pay amount.
3. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the patient identification mechanism includes one of a barcode scanner and a card reader.
4. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the user interface includes a touch screen graphical user interface that allows the patient to interact with the kiosk system.

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5. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the insurance plan identification mechanism includes one of a barcode scanner and a card reader.
6. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the data interface forms part of an electronic data interchange (EDI) between the healthcare provider and the payor.
7. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 further comprising:
a processor in communication with one or more of the patient identification mechanism, the user interface, the insurance plan identification mechanism, the data interface, and the insurance card scanner, wherein the processor is configured for controlling functionality of the kiosk system.
8. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes at least one of a front desk workstation and a billing workstation, with each workstation having access to the database.
9. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 1 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes a server that communicatively couples the database to the kiosk system.
10. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 9 wherein the server communicatively couples the database and the kiosk system to a billing system associated with the healthcare provider.
11. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 10 wherein the data interface operates in conjunction with the server and the billing system to form the electronic communication link between the healthcare provider and the payor to confirm the patient's eligibility for coverage.
12. (Original) A patient registration kiosk system that allows patients to self-register for an appointment with a healthcare provider, comprising:
a barcode scanner adapted to uniquely identify a patient so that information relevant to that patient can be retrieved from a database;

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a user interface that presents the retrieved information to the patient and allows the patient to update the information as necessary, thereby maintaining current patient information in the database;

a card reader adapted to identify insurance plan information including a payor associated with the patient, thereby maintaining current insurance information in the database;

a data interface that allows the healthcare provider to confirm the patient's eligibility for coverage by the payor based on the identified insurance plan information;

an insurance card scanner adapted to generate an image of each side of an insurance card associated with the patient for storage in the database; and

an output device adapted to provide a paper receipt relevant to the patient's appointment, the receipt including at least one of patient name, unique patient identifier, insurance payor name, plan name or type, patient insurance member number, eligibility confirmation, and office co-pay amount.

13. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 12 wherein the user interface includes a touch screen graphical user interface.

14. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 12 further comprising:

a processor in communication with one or more of the barcode scanner, the user interface, the card reader, the data interface, and the insurance card scanner, wherein the processor is configured for controlling functionality of the kiosk system.

15. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 12 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes at least one of a front desk workstation and a billing workstation, with each workstation having access to the database.

16. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 12 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes a server that communicatively couples the database, the kiosk system, and a billing system associated with the healthcare provider, wherein the data interface operates in

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conjunction with the server and the billing system to form a communication link between the healthcare provider and the payor to confirm the patient's eligibility for coverage.

17. (Original) A patient registration kiosk system that allows patients to self-register for an appointment with a healthcare provider, comprising:

a patient identification mechanism adapted to uniquely identify a patient so that information relevant to that patient can be retrieved from a database;

a user interface that presents the retrieved information to the patient and allows the patient to update the information as necessary, thereby maintaining current patient information in the database;

an insurance plan identification mechanism adapted to identify insurance plan information including a payor associated with the patient, thereby maintaining current insurance information in the database; and

a data interface that allows the healthcare provider to confirm the patient's eligibility for coverage by the payor based on the identified insurance plan information.

18. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes a server that communicatively couples the database to the kiosk system.

19. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 18 wherein the server has electronic access to current payor provider manuals.

20. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 18 wherein the server has electronic access to sample insurance card images associated with one or more payors.

21. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein at least one of a network and a server communicatively couple the database and the kiosk system to a billing system associated with the healthcare provider.

22. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 21 wherein the data interface operates in conjunction with the server and the billing system to establish electronic communication between the healthcare provider and the payor to confirm the patient's eligibility for coverage.

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23. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein the kiosk system is coupled to a network that includes at least one of a front desk workstation and a billing workstation, with each workstation having access to the database.

24. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 23 wherein each workstation has electronic access to current versions of payor provider manuals and sample insurance card images.

25. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 23 wherein at least one of the workstations is adapted to provide a split-screen display that allows a staff member of the healthcare provider to compare images of an insurance card associated with the patient with sample insurance card images provided by the payor.

26. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 further comprising a payment-intake mechanism configured to receive payment including at least one of a co-pay and an outstanding balance associated with the patient.

27. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein the data interface further allows the healthcare provider to confirm a co-pay associated with the patient.

28. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein the data interface further allows the healthcare provider to confirm particular plan benefits associated with the patient.

29. (Original) The kiosk system of claim 17 wherein the identified insurance plan information further includes a specific plan associated with the patient.